



Academic Paper

Israel's Employment of "Anti-Semitism"



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Definition of "Anti-Semitism"

The definition of "anti-Semitism" is related to the German writer Wilhelm Marr, who suggested the term in 1879, during discussions in Germany about the integration into the German society of various minorities, especially the Jews, given the ambiguous relationship between Christianity and Judaism since the Hellenistic period throughout the Christian Roman Empire. Although Semitism—as an ethnicity—includes races other than Jews, the term was associated specifically with the "hatred of Jews." This trend increased in the Middle Ages in Christian countries until there was the famous case of the French Jewish officer Alfred Dreyfus in 1894, then until the Nazi period before World War II.¹



Alfred Dreyfus

The US, along with thirty countries, has adopted the procedural definition of anti-Semitism, published in 2016 by the European Monitoring Center on Racism and Xenophobia, and based on the definition of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. This definition states that "anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of anti-Semitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities."²

However, the term, especially in the past three decades, has expanded to the point where it became difficult to separate it from the new meanings continuously employed. Many Western writers, especially Americans, have drawn attention to the confusion between on one hand anti-Semitism and on the another hand, the criticism of Israeli politics and sometimes politicians, Zionism as an ideology, Judaism, or even voting on international resolutions in the United Nations (UN)

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condemning Israeli policies. Indeed, such a political confusion is being largely employed by Israeli politics to confront the growing negative image of Israel in international public opinion.³

The resolution by the US Congress in 2008 regarding Jewish refugees might have been taken to float the refugee notion, and link it later to anti-Semitism. The US resolution stipulated that “the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), determined that Jews fleeing from Arab countries were refugees that fell within the mandate of the UNHCR.” However, most Jews migrated voluntarily and not by force, thus the above definition was used to link the property of the Jews in the Arab countries with the property of the Arabs in Palestine for the purposes of bartering. Notably, whoever rejects this definition is labeled as anti-Semitic.⁴



Yet, the “third wave of anti-Semitism,” or the so-called new anti-Semitism, has focused on “the stances of Arab public opinion toward Israeli policies,” considering the positions of Arab political movements rejecting Israeli policies as a renewal of “anti-Semitism” (although Arabs are Semites). This deliberate confusion between Jews, Zionism, Israel and anti-Semitism is evident in conference discussions and in writings sponsored by Jewish lobby groups, such as those of former Member of Canadian Parliament Irwin Cotler.⁵ In fact, the matter has developed to the point of the US State Department consider declaring some environmental or human rights groups “anti-Semitic,” including Amnesty International, Oxfam, and Human Rights Watch.⁶ This made the concept include countless dimensions, which serves Israel and its allies politically.



Irwin Cotler

Israel’s Employment of anti-Semitism

Israel’s focus on anti-Semitism is not a passing matter, but rather one of the tools of Israeli diplomacy, as evident in the following:



First: Employing anti-Semitism to Encourage Jewish Migration to Israel

According to the figures of the Jewish Agency, which works closely with the Israeli government, Jewish immigration to Israel from Western Europe has reached an all-time high as a result of a rise in “violent or non-violent activities,” or “anti-Semitic attacks.” The Jewish Agency reported that 9,880 Western European Jews, including 8000 from France, immigrated to Israel in 2015. A year Jewish references describe as the worst in terms of the rise in anti-Semitism, especially in France, which has the world’s third-largest Jewish population after Israel and the US.⁷ Western studies indicate a clear relationship between the high level of propaganda concerning “anti-Semitism” and the high rate of migration to Israel directly. Thus, if we consider the years from 2000 to 2021 and calculate the average number of anti-Semitic incidents then compare them with the years in which the number of Jewish migrants to Israel was higher than the annual average, we will find the results displayed in the following table:⁸

Years of increasing anti-Semitic Incidents and Years of Increasing the Jewish migrants to Israel (2000–2021)

Years in which anti-Semitic incidents exceeded the average of incidents (2000-2021)	Years in which the number of Jewish migrants to Israel exceeded the average number of Jewish migrants (2000-2021)
2004	2005-2007
2012	2012
2014	2014
2015	2015
2018	2018
2021 (first 6 months)	2021 (first 6 months)

The above table shows that there is almost complete congruence between the years that witnessed what Zionist circles perceived as a surge in anti-Semitic incidents, and the years that witnessed a rise in Jewish migration to Israel.



It is known that Israel seeks to bridge the demographic gap between Jews and Arabs in historical Palestine, and it has no remedy for that except by raising the population increase rate, which is now 1.9% among Jews compared to 2.7% among Arabs, and by increasing Jewish migration from around the world to Israel. Apparently, intimidation with anti-Semitic incidents reinforces the tendency of Jews to migrate to Palestine.

To make the picture clearer, it is necessary to link contemporary migrations with the migrations before and shortly after the establishment of Israel. Clearly, Israeli security services, specifically the Mossad, have played a role in “creating a worrisome environment for the Jews” wherever they lived, to force them to migrate if means of temptation did not work.⁹ In this context, it is essential to point out to two issues:¹⁰

- ▶ 1. Raising the anti-Semitism issue by Israel to consolidate the idea that it is the representative and defender of the Jews in the whole world and not only in Israel. This is a prelude to linking Jews to Israel as a first step towards dragging them to Palestine later, and it is not separate from the issue of the Jewish state, which Benjamin Netanyahu sought to perpetuate. This means that raising the anti-Semitism issue is to establish the idea that the protector of Jews outside Israel against racism and violent attacks is Israel, which makes the Jews think about resorting to their “protector.” Thus, the intensification of anti-Semitism leads directly to strengthening the link between the Jews wherever they are and Israel, for Israel is the only country in the world that has no clear geographic or demographic boundaries for citizenship based on the Law of Return of 1950 and its 1970 amendments.
- ▶ 2. The role of the Israeli intelligence services in transferring Jews to occupied Palestine. Their mission was facilitated when there were “indirect” encouragements or covert anti-Semitic operations that made the Jews uncomfortable in their communities. The Israeli intelligence (Mossad) states, on its website, that one of its tasks is to “rescue Jews from troubled countries and bring them to Israel.”¹¹ An article in *Haaretz* in 2010 confirms this idea asserting that:



Benjamin Netanyahu



Israeli intelligence services have always seen themselves as responsible not only for Israeli citizens' security, but also for that of Jewish communities abroad. This doctrine - of "the Jewish people's intelligence services" - can be traced back to the Mossad Le'Aliyah Bet, a branch of the Haganah underground that brought in illegal Jewish immigrants under the nose of the British Mandate, and remained in operation after the establishment of the state.

Two units were designated as the successors to the Mossad Le'Aliyah Bet, which was disbanded in 1952. The more secret of the two was the Mossad's Bitzur unit, tasked with overseeing the immigration of Jews from countries where their lives were in danger as well as protecting Jewish communities in the Diaspora. The other, Nativ, encouraged immigration from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, and after the fall of the Iron Curtain was charged with issuing immigration visas, establishing cultural centers and keeping track of any manifestations of anti-Semitism.¹²

The mission of the Mossad of exploiting unrest in any country and linking it to anti-Semitism abroad and employing it politically can be confirmed through some examples:¹³

- ▶ 1. Extensive migration from Iraq (1950–1951): The Zionist movement attacked and even accused of treason the leaders of the Jewish community in Iraq, especially Rabbi Sasson Kadoorie, because he was with the notion of coexistence with Arabs. Explosions took place in Jewish neighborhoods in Iraq without any party taking the responsibility for them. So, what is the explanation of the attacks on Jewish clergymen calling for coexistence, and the explosions that made Jews suffer anxiety, driving them to search for escape? It is the Israeli interest in employing anti-Semitic events to increase the population of Israel.



Sasson Kadoorie

A review of the Israeli literature on the role of the Israeli intelligence services, the Jewish organizations linked to the Israeli embassies, or the Zionist parties unequivocally indicates that Israel carried out clandestine acts of violence against Jews to force them to migrate to Israel, using the anti-Semitism card. Suffice to refer to the following documents:¹⁴

- a. A report by the British Embassy in Baghdad regarding the bombings in Iraq throughout 1950–1951 revealed that the bombings were the work of Zionist activists seeking to accelerate the migration of Jews from Iraq, and to attract wealthy Jews reluctant to migrate to Israel.



b. Following the wave of Jewish migration from the Soviet Union after its disintegration, the Israeli government noticed that there was an increase in the number of Jewish migrants from Eastern Europe to countries other than Israel, such as Europe, especially France, the US and some Latin American countries. Israel asked the German government to prevent granting migration visas to Jews so that they would be forced to go to Israel.



Jewish migration from the Soviet Union

c. Israel banned the publication of Haggai Eshed's book entitled "Who Gave the Instructions" in 1960, because it contained information about operations carried out by the Israeli intelligence services to force Jews to migrate to Israel.

d. It is known that Israel has established special secret organizations—attached to its embassies abroad—to make plans to push Jews to migrate to Israel voluntarily or forcibly. The Mossad affiliated Fortress organization, established in 1967 and is still operating, is specialized in the displacement of Jews from Arab countries, the Nativ organization is specialized in the displacement of Jews from Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, and its branch called "Bar" works under the guise of Israeli diplomatic missions.

e. The accusations of the Norwegian thinker Johan Galtung, one of the most prominent contemporary social scientists and the author of the largest number of important political predictions. These accusations were published by the *Haaretz* newspaper, claiming a possible connection between the 2011 attacks in Norway, where dozens were killed, and the Mossad. Galtung also asserted that six Jewish media companies control 96% of the media, and that 70% of the professors at the 20 most important American universities are Jewish. These factors contribute to the manipulation of local and international public opinion when similar events occur and are linked to anti-Semitism.



Johan Galtung



f. Due to his pro-Palestinian stance, former British Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn was suspended from party membership on the grounds of “anti-Semitism.” Corbyn said that “The scale of the problem [of anti-Semitism complaints within the Labour Party] was also dramatically overstated for political reasons by our opponents inside and outside the party, as well as by much of the media” –in reference to Israel and others.



Jeremy Corbyn

- ▶ 2. The role played by the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries (WOJAC) throughout 1975–1999, and the major role of the Mossad envoy in Iran, Mordechai Ben-Porat, related to the migration of Arab Jews. Dr. Jaques Barnes, one of the leaders of this organization, declared, “We are the Jewish answer to the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] ... to the right of return ... that is why we exist.”¹⁵

Second: Employing Anti-Semitism to Enhance Jewish National Sense

The term Semitic is often used to emphasize the national identity of Jews, especially among the non-religious. The Jewish seculars in Europe prefer the idea of a “Semitic race,” because it is closer to the connotation of nationalism than religion. International opinion polls have alerted decision-makers in the Israeli government to the decline of religious sentiment among Jews outside Israel, as one of these polls showed that 38% of the world’s Jews consider themselves religious, 54% not religious and 2% are convinced atheists, thus contradicting the percentage of religiosity in Israel.¹⁶ Accordingly, the ruling elite in Israel considered that “anti-Semitism” would have a stronger impact on Jews abroad than “Judaism,” and consequently, the use of ethnic expressions in Zionist literature increased. For non-religious Jews are less likely to migrate to a religious state, while “ethnic or racial” Jews are more likely to do so, when classified as a Semite.¹⁷



Studies specialized in this field indicate that Zionism uses the term Semitic in countries less concerned with the religious origin of an individual, while the term Judaism is used in countries that give importance to religious heritage. Many researchers, especially Western ones, have addressed this duality in Zionist political literature.¹⁸ At a later stage, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism were linked and considered two sides of the same coin and a number of writers and politicians were prosecuted in European countries for criticizing Zionism, and their criticism of Zionism was considered a form of anti-Semitism.¹⁹

Third: Employing Anti-Semitism to Deter the Critics of Israeli Policies in the International Community

Using anti-Semitism in this manner is seen in the following:

- ▶ 1. Caution against supporting Palestinians: Israeli policies towards the Palestinians had a negative impact on the image of Israel, particularly in Europe, and generally worldwide, increasing sympathy with the Palestinians. After realizing this danger, Israel has been employing anti-Semitism by linking “attacks on Jews or their synagogues” to Palestinians or their supporters from European human rights groups or others, especially Islamic movements, regardless the lack of evidence supporting such claim.²⁰

The previous idea can be illustrated through some examples; the fighting between the Resistance and Israel in May 2021 increased tensions in the US between supporters of Israel and supporters of the Palestinians, prompting the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), an international Jewish organization based in New York, to assert that it has seen a “serious and drastic uptick” in anti-Semitic hate crimes since the beginning of the conflict. ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt said in a statement, “We are tracking acts of harassment, vandalism and violence as well as a torrent of online abuse” against Jews, adding, “It is happening around the world.” Five Jewish groups wrote a letter to President Joe Biden expressing concern about the surge of anti-Semitic hate crimes in the US amid the military confrontation between Israel and the Palestinian Resistance. The American Jewish Community, ADL, the Jewish Federations of North America, Hadassah and the Union of Orthodox Jewish



Congregations of America urged US President Biden to use his platform to condemn anti-Semitism and take a number of actions to combat anti-Semitism. In their letter, these organizations indicated that they “fear that the way the conflict has been used to amplify anti-Semitic rhetoric, embolden dangerous actors and attack Jews and Jewish communities will have ramifications far beyond these past two weeks.”²¹

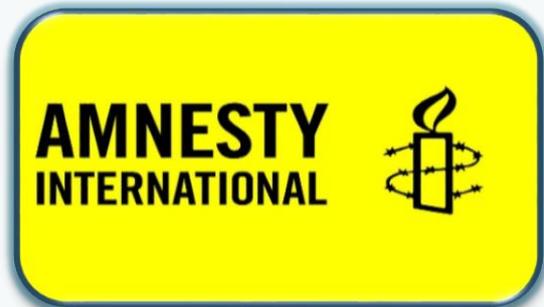
- ▶ 2. It is necessary to note that the frequency of talk about anti-Semitism increases when Palestinians are exposed to more attacks. Western studies and reports confirm this through the following indicators:²²
 - a. For the first time, calls for confronting anti-Semitism rose dramatically in the US in 1994 after an American Jew committed a massacre in the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron in which about 130 Palestinians were killed and wounded. The strong reaction among the American public prompted the revival of the anti-Semitism issue to absorb the reverberations of the crime committed against the Palestinians.
 - b. The frequency of campaigns to stir up “anti-Semitism” increased dramatically in December 2000, with the intensification of the Palestinian uprising and the resulting international sympathy with the Palestinian people.
 - c. The wave of talk about anti-Semitism returned in May 2021, after the media began reporting about the ferocious Israeli assault on Gaza, its destruction of houses, buildings and a tower block housing the offices of the U.S.-based Associated Press and other news media. Moreover, Israeli policies witnessed harsh criticism by international civil society institutions and human rights bodies.



Fourth: Provoking Jews Abroad to Continue Supporting Israel Financially and Morally

As we mentioned previously, Israel employs anti-Semitism to re-establish its connection with the Jews abroad, especially in the US. It is known that the criticism of Israeli politics by the American Jews is increasing, and that's not considered positive by Israel, whereas anti-Semitism will bring this Jewish audience back to Israel. US official figures indicate that the number of anti-Semitic incidents jumped from 127 incidents in the two weeks prior to the Sword of Jerusalem battle (May 2021) to 222 in the two weeks after it began. Also, the phenomenon of correlation between the rise in attacks and the occurrence of Palestinian-Israeli military clashes is confirmed by previous periods of clashes, but in the Sword of Jerusalem battle, it increased, according to ADL figures.²³

Remarkably, when international organizations (governmental or non-governmental) condemned the targets of the Israeli raids in the Sword of Jerusalem battle, "anti-Semitic" incidents increased, prompting these organizations (such as Amnesty International) to issue statements condemning anti-Semitism, to create balance with statements strongly supporting Palestinians.²⁴



Conclusion

Concerning anti-Semitism, the Israeli media diplomacy is based on the following foundations:

- ▶ 1. Generalizing the concept of anti-Semitism to include any criticism of Israeli policy in any field of international relations.
- ▶ 2. Considering any human sympathy with the Palestinians or advocating for their rights an anti-Semitic incident.
- ▶ 3. Creating a state of anxiety among Jews abroad to encourage them to immigrate to Israel.



- ▶ 4. Preventing the apathy of Jews abroad towards Israel, and ensuring their continued support, whether financial one or through facilitating Israel's political, intelligence and economic activities in the countries where they live.



- ▶ 5. Israel does not hesitate to exaggerate or fabricate events or violent incidents, then label them as anti-Semitic incidents to achieve the above goals.

Recommendation

Human rights institutions, Arab and Palestinian research centers and resistance forces must track and monitor the incidents that demonstrate the connection between these incidents and Israel's "anti-Semitism employment diplomacy." They must publish the results and distribute them to various media outlets, diplomatic missions and researchers, especially in foreign countries and societies.



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